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Extensions of country programmes in the Arab States region

Note by the Executive Director

Summary

The present note contains information on the one-year extension of the country programme for the Occupied Palestinian Territory.

In accordance with established procedures, the Executive Director approves the first one-year extension of a country programme, while requests for extensions for a second year or two-year extensions are submitted to the Executive Board for approval.

The Executive Board may wish to take note of the one-year country programme extension for the Occupied Palestinian Territory.

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One-year country programme extension approved by the Executive Director

Country	Original programme period	Year proposed for extension	Explanation		
			United Nations harmonization	In-country political development	Implementation and/or other issues
Occupied Palestinian Territory	2006-2009	2010	A one-year extension of the country programme will permit all United Nations Development Group Executive Committee agencies to begin their new country programmes at the same time. Due to the commonalities in goals between UNICEF and UNFPA, which are related to maternal health, adolescent health, neonatal care and combating gender-based violence, as well as the number of common programme partners, starting the country programme cycle at the same time would increase programmatic synergies and United Nations coordination and collaboration. It would also provide improved programming for Palestinian women and children.	Since 2006, the Occupied Palestinian Territory has witnessed a growing political rift within Gaza and West Bank. As a result of the unrest, the internationally supported Government fled Gaza and an international embargo was enforced on the territory. Due to increased isolation, the ability of United Nations organizations to continue dialogue and programme interventions has been hindered. More recently, the situation in Gaza has been further compromised by armed conflicts between Hamas and Israeli forces, and the resulting military intervention.	UNFPA has been unable to sign project agreements with institutions in Gaza due to restricted access. This has limited initiatives and negated the possibility of nationally executed projects. Partner non-governmental organizations have continued to execute projects that provide vital services, such as emergency response, but the monitoring of these activities remains a challenge. UNFPA and UNICEF, in collaboration with the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, will conduct a family health survey that will provide much needed data to improve targeting for greater impact. An extension of the current programme cycle will allow adequate time to assess the situation.